

is commonly most regular during the month of July. Under the proposed scheme a month of the best part of the teaching season would be lost.

3. Many of the child ren in rural sections are required to do light labour at home for a short period at seed-time and again at harvest. Shut up the schools during the month of July, and these will be almost wholly deprived of their benefits during the summer season.

4. The loss of time at the first of the year will gradually grow less as things become settled. The Trustees have the latter half of the month of October to make their arrangements for the incoming year. The fact of a school being in operation in the section does not in the least interfere with them. The delay in engaging teachers is now, practically, nothing, as a teacher may know, "before the lamps are blown out at the annual meeting," if it is desired to re-engage him.

5. As to the convenience of teachers attending the half-yearly examinations, and of commissioners travelling to their semi-annual meetings, it ought to be remembered that these are for the schools, and not the schools for these.

These considerations were held, by a majority of the association, to be conclusive against the proposed change in the school year. The motion was therefore rejected, and an amendment, moved by Mr. THOMPSON, was passed, recommending a small change in the time and extent of the summer vacations.

By invitation, Mr. RAND addressed the Association relative to the progress made in educational matters since the last annual meeting of the Teachers. He began with remarking on the increasing interest everywhere manifest among the people with regard to school affairs. The law is studied, reports and statistics are carefully examined by many in all parts of the province who a few years ago paid very little attention to such things. He had been frequently astonished in going through the country, at the accuracy of information which prevails in reference to the provisions and working of the School Law. The change in popular feeling towards the measure, the growing tendency to regard education in its true light, to acknowledge its vital importance, and to contribute willingly and liberally for its support, gave ample proof that the free school system had taken a deep and permanent hold on the minds of the people. This, in a free country, was, he felt, the surest guarantee of success. Just so far as the people take the matter in hand, feeling that public education is their business, that the schools are their schools, will the educational interests of the Province flourish.

The members of the association were already pretty familiar with the changes made for the better in the school law at the last session of the Legislature. It was not necessary to remind them that in their meeting a year ago, they had resolved to petition for the repeal of voluntary subscription as a means of supporting free schools. That for which the petition asked had been done, and the support of a school system in the Province was now placed on a sound and reliable basis. It was not needful to remind the association of the difficulties and discouragements in the face of which these advances had been gained. When last winter it was rumored that the question was to be brought forward in the Legislature, many of the best friends of free education were in alarm lest such a step would prove the means of losing all that had already been achieved. He had received letters entreating that his influence be used to prevent so great a risk. Even the Secretary of the Association, beside him on the platform, desirous and anxious as he was to see the principle of assessment adopted in its entirety, had said, "Be careful." Ay, and even his honored predecessor, the President, an untiring advocate of free schools, had counselled him not to make any attempt to procure a change. Yet the attempt was made, and he felt that the association and the country owed much to these in the Legislature who, in the face of difficulties, many of which probably did not appear on the surface, had carried such an important and extensive reform in our educational system.

The practical results of the year, as shown by the statistics of the schools in operation, had been eminently satisfactory, considering the extremely uncertain mode in which the local funds necessary for their support had to be raised. A statement of the number of children at school during the first term had been made public, showing an increase of upwards

of nine thousands over the corresponding term of the year previous. The statistics of the summer term, so far as compiled, had shown a like satisfactory growth. [Mr. R. here proceeded to give certain facts, which will be found under "Educational Intelligence."]

In view of these results, some might say, "Look what voluntary subscription can do!" But if all the circumstances are borne in mind, the advocates of that principle will have very little to boast of. It must be remembered that the cost of all the houses repaired, and the new ones built, was raised by assessment; that the public grants were more than double what they had ever been before; and that those who desired assessment agreed to carry on the schools in their various sections at any sacrifice, looking to the legislature for a speedy amendment of the law. Had not their expectations in this behalf been fulfilled, he (Mr. R.) believed the results of the year would have been very different. As it was, many trustees had been compelled to pay teachers out of their own private means. The teachers, too, had suffered great decrease of salary, and the best of them would soon have sought more remunerative employment, had they not felt confident that a change must come. In the three counties, Pictou, Colchester, and Kings, there had been thirty, during the past term, whose only salary was the amount received from the public grants. Every one must see that such a condition of things could not last long without producing the most disastrous results.

After Mr. Rand had concluded, the President made some remarks expressive of the pleasure with which he had heard the statements just made, and explaining that in asking to let the law stand unamended, so far as regards voluntary subscription, he was influenced by the view which he holds of the duty of each parent to assume a special responsibility and care in the education of his own children.

AFTERNOON SESSION.

For the afternoon the subject of TEXT-BOOKS had been announced for discussion by the Committee on Business, in accordance with the request of some members of the association.

Mr. GEORGE expressed himself generally in approbation of the selection made of books for our schools. It was a difficult matter to suit everybody as to the books proper, or best adapted, for use in schools; yet so far as he had examined the prescribed books, he believed the selection a very wise and judicious one. He did not by any means hold that the books were perfect, but believed that the defects were as few as in any books on the same subjects, and were such as might easily be remedied in the course of time.

Mr. WHISTON thought the prescribed books, more particularly the Reading series, a great boon to teachers. His only fear was that there might not always be enough of them.

Mr. MORRIS could not understand why the sentences in the first book of the Reading series begin with small letters instead of capitals. In writing dictation exercises pupils are told to begin every sentence with a capital, and he thought it wrong to place in the hands of beginners books in which a contrary principle is followed.

Mr. PATTERSON objected to No. VII. of the Reading series. He believed the style of the selections it contains too heavy, and not at all adapted to teaching elocution. He quoted his own experience in learning to read as going to convince him that simple and animated pieces, easily comprehended by the pupils, are best calculated to produce good readers. He also held that a synopsis of the rules of elocution, with examples under each, should be given in each of the advanced books. In this respect he knew no better book than *Porter's Rhetorical Reader*.

Mr. CALKIN thought that Mr. Patterson had misjudged the design of the book in question. It was intended to be used, not by beginners, but as an exercise book for pupils who had already been made familiar with the principles of good reading. As to the rules of elocution, he thought it more convenient to have them as at present, published in a small volume separately.

Mr. MILLER held that the rules, if given in any of the books, should be incorporated in the first "Step by Step!"